

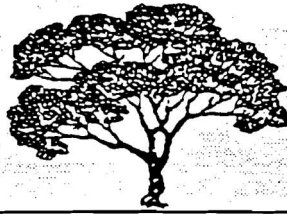
MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

**BANCROFT
NEIGHBORHOOD
ACTION PLAN**

Date Adopted by the Policy Board: June 27, 1994

Date Adopted by the City Council: July 15, 1994

Document Number: 94-221M



The Bancroft Neighborhood Association

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Neighborhood Revitalization Program Action Plan APRIL 1994

Action Plan Summary

The greatest concerns of Bancroft residents are the stabilization and vitality of residential property, reversing the decline of commercial areas, and increasing personal safety. Thus the largest component of our plan is for home improvements and funding for commercial improvements to maintain and increase investment in the neighborhood over the long term. There is also a great deal of community interest in building an identity for Bancroft, thus the emphasis on rehabilitating Bancroft School, one of the oldest schools in the city, building traditions of blooming gardens and block clubs, creating a neighborhood space at the holding pond, and supporting an active neighborhood association. Bancroft is committed to working jointly with surrounding neighborhoods on common projects and has committed funds for those purposes. The Chicago Avenue Task Force, Phelps Park collaboration, and 38th and Cedar are a few well identified projects. The plan incorporates short-term immediate improvements with flexibility for long range planning and project development. The tenacity and hard work of many volunteer: over a three year span to complete this process deserves special merit. Bancroft has developed a neighborhood organization and a future workplan to be proud of.

TOTAL PLAN REQUEST	\$2.0 MILLION
HOUSING	\$846,000
EARLY ACCESS	\$230,000
FAMILY/SOCIAL	\$569,000
COMMERCIAL	\$355,000
TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS	106
SURVEY RESPONSE RATE	72%
ATTENDANCE AT KICK-OFF	300
STEERING COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS	40
RATIFICATION VOTE	96 FOR 0 AGAINST

Neighborhood Description

Bancroft Neighborhood is in South Central Minneapolis bordered by Chicago - Cedar Avenues, and 38th - 42nd Streets. Part of the Powderhorn Planning Community, it is centrally located allowing easy access to urban amenities yet enough removed to be a quiet residential community. More than 80% of our structures were built before 1940 and are primarily owner-occupied. Named for Bancroft Elementary School, a 3-6 continuous progress school, the neighborhood has no parks within its boundaries, but a newly built public works holding pond provides some open green space. A small commercial district exists along Bloomington Avenue between 40th and 42nd Street, as well as small commercial nodes along the perimeter streets. Bancroft is a young community, with 23% of population under 18, and is becoming a more racially diverse community, with 1990 census figures reporting 21% of the 3,371 population being persons of color.

Bancroft Neighborhood Association

The Bancroft Neighborhood Association (ENA) formed in May 1991 with residents organizing a meeting which 75 persons attended. Application to the Neighborhood Revitalization Program was made and the July 1991 selection of Bancroft was a boost to organizing residents. By-laws were adopted and a community council of fifteen persons elected in January 1992. Bancroft Neighborhood Association is incorporated and has received federal tax-exempt status. The BNA currently maintains an office with part-time staff at Bethel Lutheran Church in Bancroft, holds the majority of its meetings there, but has also held meetings at Bancroft School, Phelps park, What's Cooking restaurant, and Calvary Lutheran Church.

NRP Planning Process

Simultaneously with developing the neighborhood association, a Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) organizing committee, later referred to as the NRP steering committee was formed. From September 1991 to April 1994, over forty persons participated on this leadership committee. Volunteer leaders from this committee attended trainings developed both by NRP staff and private organizations to prepare for organizing Bancroft and accomplishing this planning process.

A survey was prepared and mailed June 1992 to all residents and businesses in Bancroft. This was completed by a phenomenal rate of 72% of the neighborhood. Results were tabulated by the Minnesota Center for Survey Research. Clear issues and priorities were established from the survey providing focus groups a starting point for discussion and planning. A survey copy is attached.

The NRP Workshop phase began with the Bancroft United Cultures Kick-off event. Over 300 persons attended this successful event, which featured ethnic food, entertainment including Swedish folk dancers, Native American drummers, African story teller, Lutheran bell choir, and a jazz band. Information booths, door prizes, and focus group tables for ideas and commitments to work on the NRP plan, and a children's activity room rounded out the event. A professional color poster depicting a photograph of a diverse group of Bancroft residents was used to advertise this event as well as invitations mailed to each household.

Early Access proposals were discussed and narrowed down to two neighborhood concerns, revitalization of Bancroft School grounds and Home Improvement funds. Realizing that the school project involved lengthy joint planning and collaboration, and was better suited to include in the final Action Plan, the neighborhood voted unanimously to apply for a \$230,000 Exterior Home Improvement Program. A committee

was formed to develop guidelines and conduct contract negotiations for this project. This program is currently underway and home improvements must be started by September 1994.

In September 1993 three distinct focus groups, Commercial Development, Housing, and Family/Social Issues, began researching and writing ideas for the Action Plan. An additional sub-committee of family/social formed to plan improvements for Bancroft Elementary School. The steering committee continued to meet monthly, coordinating these groups. At the November 22, 1993 Bancroft Neighborhood Association annual meeting, rough drafts of the major concerns and proposals were presented to the neighborhood. Focus groups continued to meet through February, presenting written plans to the steering committee. The steering committee met weekly in March 1994 to finalize the action plan. Plan was presented to the Bancroft Community Council April 7, 1994, mailed to the community through the Bancroft Banner April 9, and an open community meeting for ratification held April 26, 1994. See Appendix A for schedule of meetings.

Outreach Efforts

From the beginning, Bancroft has been committed to involving all residents in the NRP process. A neighborhood newsletter, The Bancroft Banner, was developed and has been regularly mailed notifying residents and businesses of all NRP meetings. Additional phone calling and mailings for specific meetings was done. The kick-off event was specifically designed to welcome persons from varying cultures, from advertising efforts, entertainment and food provided, to personal contacts within various groups. A racism questionnaire was collected at the kick-off event, and responses to that addressed. The community council, which included leaders of the NRP focus groups, attended a racism awareness seminar. Later in the process, three special meetings were held for renters and persons of color to respond to the plan to date.

Housing Recommendations — \$1,076,000

Vision: The Bancroft neighborhood will be a friendly, connected community of well-maintained affordable homes, providing a safe, stable environment for all residents.

Maintain quality owner occupied homes

1. Access low cost improvement resources to support routine maintenance.

- Establish an annual Bancroft Home Improvement Month which might involve the following components:
 - Cooperative purchasing of home improvement supplies and contracting services;
 - Membership and/or subsidy in existing tool lending programs;
 - Reduced rate agreements with local vendors for rental and purchase of equipment;
 - Coordinating shared rental costs among Bancroft Residents.

Commitments: Bancroft Neighborhood Association (BNA) will commit staff and office resources towards this. **Timeline:** summer 1995 to begin.

2. Provide resource network

- Distribute self-administered checklist for home maintenance along with local resource information for home improvements, home maintenance needs.
- Maintain referral listing for home maintenance needs.
- Utilize Housing Fair, Bancroft Housing Improvement Program (BHIP) to promote resources and public housing agencies.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will commit staff and office resources. BNA will add housing resource responsibility to BNA staff job description.

3. Continue Bancroft Housing Improvement Program (BHIP)

- Establish an ongoing BHIP committee to oversee the program. Increase loan portion of program annually to extend funds.

Commitments/Resources: \$975,000 NRP funds for ten year program. BNA will seek request for proposals to administer program funds for all NRP Plan housing components. Administration costs will not exceed 10%. MCDA will assist BNA in developing these requests and submit its own proposal to meet Bancroft's housing needs.

2. Provide resources for vacancies

- Promote vacancies to realtors, making personal contact with listing agents.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will commit staff and office resources towards this. **Timeline:** Fall 1994.

Involve appropriate agencies/private developers to fill vacancies, Minneapolis Community Development Agency (MCDA), RIF program, Project for Pride in Living, Habitat for Humanity, Southside Housing.

3. Develop down payment programs/ low interest loans to assist renters to purchase and occupy vacant and boarded Bancroft homes.

- Continue discussion with local organizations regarding revolving funds and loans.

Commitments: \$100,000 NRP funds for 10 year program.

Have environmentally safe homes and land in Bancroft

1. Research and educate neighborhood of existing lead/asbestos/radon exposure problems, safe removal or containment techniques, prevention measures and sources for testing and funding assistance

- Publish articles in *Banner*, maintain resource material in BNA office, offer a CACHIE class in the neighborhood on environmental hazards yearly, distribute educational material with each homeowner utilizing BHIP program monies. provide educational material at Housing Fair.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will commit staff and office and newsletter resources towards these outreaches. Minneapolis Health Department will commit staff and available written resources to this educational effort. \$1000 NRP funds for educational materials. **Timeline:** Fall 1994 and continuing.

2. Identify and eliminate large areas of exposed dirt, the prime source of lead dust poisoning.

- The BNA garden committee, housing committee or block clubs will identify problem sites providing homeowners with educational information on the lead dust problem and other hazardous waste. If necessary work with Housing Inspections for code violations such as dirt driveways, and if necessary provide matching funds for grass, groundcover, or other covering through the BHIP program.

Support 100% home occupancy

1. Identify vacant and boarded homes annually

- Conduct annual spring walk of neighborhood to identify vacant and boarded homes. Research ownership and vacancy status.

Commitments: BNA will commit office and staff resources to assist Housing Committee to conduct annual survey.

Family/Social Issues/Safety — \$569,000

Vision: Bancroft will be a neighborhood where people feel welcome, safe and comfortable both in the streets and in their homes. All residents will be active and responsible members of our community.

Increase the sense of safety in the neighborhood

1. Establish a Crime Prevention Committee

- Crime Prevention will become a standing committee of the BNA.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will commit staff and office resources to assist a Crime Prevention Committee.

2. Increase Block Club participation to 100% of our blocks within 2 years

- Identify unorganized blocks and promote benefits of involvement.

Commitments/Resources: Community Crime Prevention/SAFE team will continue to doorknock and utilize other recruitment tactics. Bancroft Neighborhood Association (BNA) will commit staff and office resources to assist CCP/SAFE efforts and block club leaders for copying and producing flyers, mailings, etc.

Have a volunteer appreciation night.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will plan this annual event to begin in 1995. Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) funds of \$500 to establish this event.

- Publish quarterly crime statistics in *Bancroft Banner*.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will begin publishing in fall 1994. Newsletter and Crime Prevention Committees will oversee this.

- Establish a \$10,000 grant fund for special crime prevention projects, including incentives to organize new block clubs, programs to encourage existing block clubs, organize citizen patrols and other innovative ideas. Maximum grant will be \$200 per block.

Commitments/Resources: \$10,000 NRP funds, Crime Prevention Committee will administer funds. CCP/SAFE will commit staff resources to assist with projects.

3. Increase police presence in neighborhood and police interaction with residents

- Establish a beat patrol of the neighborhood, including some hours per week on foot or bike.

Commitments/Resources: Responding to a joint Bryant/Bancroft request, police department has committed \$8,000 of its \$60,000 1994 buy back dollars toward three weekly bike patrol shifts along 38th St. from 4th Avenue to Cedar Avenue for the summer months in 1994. BNA will work with the Police Department to identify problem areas, determine hours and days and assist with selection of officers if possible. Bancroft Neighborhood will dedicate \$25,000 of NRP funds for additional buy back patrols over three years if needed to supplement current allocation of officers.

4. Improve outdoor lighting

Inventory all blocks of neighborhood for lighting needs, recording areas in need of improvement.

Commitments/Resources: Crime Prevention Committee will do this Spring 1995.

- Establish a lighting fund to install additional lighting.

Commitments/Resources: \$4,000 NRP funds, Crime Prevention Committee will administer funds. Public Works will assist with neighborhood lighting inventory.

5. Increase the number of McGruff Houses

Work with CCP/SAFE to increase McGruff Houses by 50% within two years, by doorknocking, promoting McGruff at all neighborhood functions.

Include McGruff volunteers in BNA volunteer recognition program.

Commitments/Resources: BNA staff will work with CCP/SAFE, Crime Prevention Committee will promote McGruff.

Increase pedestrian safety and eliminate hazardous traffic conditions

1. Provide safe crossing to public use areas

Install four way stops at 13th and 14th Avenue and 39th St. near Bancroft Elementary School.

Commitments/Resources: \$500 NRP in addition to petitioning city council to use public works funds for new stop signs. Timeline: Fall 1994.

- Provide a safe crossing to Phelps Park at 39th and Chicago Avenue.

Commitments/Resources: Public Works will pursue installation of semi-actuated stoplight and investigate state aid resources for matching funds. \$20,000 NRP funds. Will seek \$20,000 net debt bond funds. Timeline: Spring 1995.

2. Complete all curb cuts with five years

Inventory the neighborhood bi-annually to locate and prioritize needed curb cuts.

Commitments/Resources: Public Works plans a two year campaign to complete all curb cuts citywide.

Respond to needs of seniors, enabling them to continue to be active members of the community

1. Form a Seniors Committee to address senior issues

- Create a standing Seniors Committee of the Bancroft Neighborhood Association (BNA), holding at least two daytime meetings per year.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will establish this committee fall 1993.

Provide quality childcare options and activities for Bancroft families

1. Assist parents in finding neighborhood quality childcare

- Publish a quarterly childcare corner in *Bancroft Banner*, listing family daycare openings, cooperative ventures.

Commitments/Resources: BNA Newsletter Committee will publish this fall 1994. GMDCA will work with Bancroft to identify and promote child care options.

- Sponsor childcare baby-sitting certificate programs for neighborhood teens.

Commitments/Resources: Camp Fire Boys and Girls, and Phelps Park will offer this course as requested. First course offering May 1994.

2. Assist and promote family daycare homes in Bancroft

- Provide grants/no interest loans to finance building code requirements for licensing.

Commitments/Resources: BNX will write into future Home Improvement programs funds to be available for either interior or exterior improvements for daycare homes needing upgrades for licensing. BNA will work with GMDCA to explore funding sources for providers needing assistance.

3. Promote activity programs for children, youth, and families

- Publicize park and other programs in Banner. Include Park listings as insert to Banner.

Commitments/Resources: BNX Newsletter Committee will oversee these additions to newsletter.

- Work with Bancroft School to increase usage of neighborhood facilities.

Commitment/Resources: Bancroft school principal and staff have committed to working with community to open building to additional uses and provide more youth opportunities outside of school hours.

Create more employment and leadership opportunities for youth in Bancroft

1. Promote youth leadership

- Establish a youth council, whose president will have a seat on the Bancroft Community Council.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will establish council spring 1995, president to sit on council beginning November 1995.

2. Promote existing youth employment programs

Have annual spring resource outreach to publicize employment services at Sabathani Center, summer Park and Rec opportunities, etc

Commitments/Resources: BNA Community Development Committee will plan this outreach. BNA will seek to renew Citation Savers youth employment program for Bancroft youth through METP. Timeline: Begin spring 1995.

3. Provide youth job opportunities with Bancroft

- Develop referral service for teen employment, i.e. babysitting, yard work, snow shoveling.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will commit staff and office resources for this. Timeline: Fall 1994.

Community Identity

1. Develop "Gateway" projects to welcome people into the community

- Apply for city and other arts grant to fund gateway project at holding pond at 42nd Street and Bloomingcon Avenue.

- Develop at least one community garden promoting self-sufficiency of families and environmental education.

- Promote blooming boulevards and other streetscape revitalization to strengthen home investments and livability.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will coordinate these programs and seek outside funding.

2. Participate in Phelps Park revitalization

- Contribute financially to expansion project in cooperation with the Bryant Neighborhood, Powderhorn Park, Minneapolis Boys & Girls Club, Hennepin County and Minneapolis Parks & Recreation.

- Recruit at least one Bancroft resident to participate in collaborative committee overseeing new programming at Phelps Park.

Commitments/Resources: \$200,000 NRP funds (Park Board projection for our portion of multi-purpose addition).

3. Improve and rehabilitate the Bancroft School block

- Develop a long-range **improvement** plan.

Commitment/Resources: A joint planning group of Bancroft residents, school staff, students and parents and Minneapolis Public Schools facilities staff has been meeting since fall 1993 to develop plan. Public Works has committed personnel to complete plan.

- **Contribute** financially to physical improvements outside Bancroft school, including new playground equipment, benches, shade trees and other plantings to preserve environmental quality, a drinking fountain, **environmental** learning area, and new parking area.

Commitments/Resources: \$100,000 NRP funds. Minneapolis Public School NRP Committee has recommended to the School Board a \$50,000 contribution to this project. Total project cost is estimated at \$335,000. Additional funding will be sought through private grants, school fundraising efforts, Minneapolis Public School long-range capital improvements fund.

4. Establish a welcome wagon packet to be distributed through Block Clubs to new residents

Produce a neighborhood brochure with history of neighborhood, purpose of neighborhood association, general demographics.

Commitments/Resources: \$500 NRP funds, Office of Public Affairs will print 1,000 copies.

- Compile folders of resource material from city, social service agencies, local parks, Community Education, and others, include neighborhood brochure, and distribute to new residents through block club leaders.

Commitments/Resources: Bancroft Neighborhood Association (BNA) Community Development Committee will update packets yearly. Timeline: Begin fall 1994.

5. Publish Bancroft Banner nine times a year

Reduce and eliminate Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) funding of *Bancroft Banner* by seeking new funding sources and advertising revenue over a twenty-four month transition period.

Commitments/Resources: NRP funding of \$10,000 for twenty-four months of production. Timeline: Immediate upon Action Plan approval.

6. Provide staffing and program funding for the BNA to implement NRP plan

Commitments/Resources: NRP funds of \$193,000 to pay a full-time staff person for two years, a part-time staff person for the following three years, and administrative costs for the organization to help complete Bancroft's NRP Action Plan. Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church currently continues discounted rental of office, free meeting space and free photocopier use. BNA will seek additional funds to augment administrative costs through internships, volunteers, private grants, MCDA funds. Timeline: Begin staffing fall of 1994.

7. Install signage identifying Bancroft Neighborhood

Design Bancroft Neighborhood sign, install ten signs around perimeter of Bancroft.

Commitments/Resources: \$2,000 NRP funds. Timeline: Spring 1995 to be installed.

8. Compile a history of Bancroft

- Have volunteers compile oral and written history of Bancroft, producing written or video document.

Commitments/Resources: Bancroft School will assist in developing this history project.

9. Establish Public Works holding pond as a focal point of community

- Develop a naming procedure.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will undertake this project. Timeline: 1994 project.

- Install signs and/or plaques identifying park.

Commitments/Resources: \$1500 NRP funds. Timeline: Planned and installed in 1995.

- Sponsor bi-annual neighborhood event at holding pond.

Commitments/Resources: \$2000 to establish this event. Timeline: First event 1995.

- Install drinking fountain at holding pond.

Commitments/Resources: PublicWorks will install spring 1994.

Commercial Development Recommendations — \$355,000

Vision/Goal: Create attractive and economically viable commercial areas that serve the immediate and surrounding areas by establishing conditions that are conducive to the retention and creation of businesses.

1. Participate in collaborative efforts to support redevelopment and/or revitalization of all commercial areas in Bancroft and bordering areas

Create a Bancroft Commercial Development fund to be administered by the Minneapolis Community Development Agency (MCDA) for future commercial projects approved by the Bancroft Community Council, including acquisition of property, demolition of buildings for reuse as residential or green space, expansion and improvements on existing commercial areas, streetscape and parking improvements. Where feasible, NRP funds will seek to leverage private investment and other sources of public commercial planning and development financing, including the Neighborhood Commercial Strategic Planning pilot program.

Commitments/Resources: \$346,000 NRP funds, of which \$106,000 is allotted as indicated below.

Current projects identified for potential use of this fund in addition to specific allocations are:

-Project A: Support redevelopment and revitalization of commercial node at 38th Street and Cedar Avenue by working with Powderhorn Community Council.

-Project B: In conjunction with the Chicago Avenue Task Force, develop specific strategies for improvements on 38th and Chicago. Possibilities include locating neighborhood offices at that intersection, razing the current tailor shop, and recruiting new commercial businesses and retail investments to the neighborhood. Additional joint corridor projects could include cooperative lighting designs, flower planters, bus shelter designs, etc., to enhance the Chicago Avenue appearance. Specific improvements or activities to be assisted shall be recommended by the Chicago Avenue Task Force and/or the Bancroft Community Council and approved by the BCC.

-Project C: Establish the commercial area on Bloomington Avenue from 40th to 42nd Streets (and 1/2 block beyond if the Northrup neighborhood to our south is willing) as the main commercial area of the Bancroft neighborhood. Work with a developer consultant, MCDA, and the city to develop a comprehensive plan for this area. Request MCDA to establish a development project area. Maximize use of private and other public funds to plan and develop this area.

Funds Allotted: Up to \$50,000 to share on a 50/50 basis MCDA net costs involved in purchasing vacant parking lots at 3137 and 4151 Bloomington Avenue, to bring a new full-service grocery store to the neighborhood. This will leverage approximately \$1,000,000 of private investment into Bancroft grocery retail development.

-Project D: Future commercial area projects—including Cedar corridor work, 38th Street corridor, and other commercial needs.

-Project E: Create a commercial exterior improvement fund, providing matching grants and/or low interest loans to Bancroft businesses. Businesses in Project C not eligible; Project B businesses eligible only if consistent with future development plans.

Funds allotted: \$50,000

2. Facilitate an atmosphere of mutual support between businesses, neighborhood residents, and the neighborhood organization.

- Support establishment of a business association for businesses in Bancroft and surrounding neighborhoods to represent business interests, coordinate business improvements, develop neighborhood business directory and promote commercial development. Assist business association to apply for financial assistance through MCDA's Business Association Assistance Program.

Commitments: NRP funds of \$9,000. MCDA Business Association Assistance Program funds of \$3,000 annually to be applied for.

3. Enhance compatibility between commercial and residential uses

- Evaluate the current zoning of residential and commercial to identify necessary zoning changes (possibly enforce current zoning if at issue).

- Enhance buffers between commercial and residential, reducing tension between commercial uses and adjacent residential properties.

Commitments/Resources: BNA will commit staff and office resources in conjunction with business association towards these strategies.

4. Support appropriate use of vacant commercial properties

- Work with Pollution Control Agency on identifying polluted sites and seeking clean-up funds, e.g. Superfund.

- Create an inventory of vacant and deteriorated businesses and create a mechanism to recruit businesses that fulfill a neighborhood need. Empower BNA staff and Bancroft Business Association, when formed, to take a proactive role.

Commitments: BNA will commit staff and office resources to work in conjunction with the local business association leaders.